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TAGS: SOPN PFOR KS US
SUBJ: KOREAN PRESS COVERS PAK TONG-SON AFFAIR
REF: SEOUL 10440 (DTG 1208577 DEC 77)

SUMMARY: KOREAN PRESS ON TUESDAY REPORTS SEVERAL DAY DELAY IN FINAL AGREEMENT ON SETTLEMENT OF PAK CASE, BECAUSE OF U.S. CONGRESSIONAL DEMANDS FOR PAK'S APPEARANCE. PRESS SEEMS TO REFLECT ROKG POSITION THAT FINAL OBSTACLE IS USG GUARANTEE THAT PAK NEED NOT STAND BEFORE CONGRESS. END SUMMARY.

1. ON DECEMBER 13, KOREAN VERNACULAR PRESS GENERALLY SPECULATED IN FRONT-PAGE ARTICLES THAT FINAL AGREEMENTS FOR SETTLEMENT OF PAK TONG-SON CASE MIGHT BE DELAYED FOR A FEW DAYS. MORNING HAN'GUK ILBO AND AFTERNOON SINA ILBO STATED THAT ROKG WAS AWAITING FINAL USG CLARIFICATION AS TO WHETHER PAK COULD BE CITED FOR CONTEMPT OF CONGRESS IF HE IGNORED A CONGRESSIONAL ORDER TO APPEAR. SINA ILBO CITED

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A "GOVERNMENT SOURCE" ON DECEMBER 13, AS SAYING IN ESSENCE "IF PAK GOES TO U.S., IT WILL BE AS A WITNESS, NOT A DEFENDANT. AS TWO COUNTRIES WILL HAVE AGREED TO SATISFY U.S. DESIRES EXCLUSIVELY THROUGH TESTIMONY IN COURT. HE WILL HAVE NO DUTY TO APPEAR BEFORE CONGRESS."

2. OTHER ARTICLES QUOTED GOVERNMENT SOURCES AS POINTING OUT THAT ROKG HAS CONDUCTED ITS NEGOTIATIONS ON ASSUMPTION THAT ONLY COURT TESTIMONY BY PAK WOULD BE INVOLVED. GOVERNMENT SEOUL SINMUN QUOTED A FOREIGN MINISTRY SOURCE AS SAYING THAT PROBLEM OF TESTIMONY BEFORE CONGRESS HAD BEEN RAISED EARLY IN NEGOTIATIONS AND THAT, IF CONGRESS REQUIRED PAK'S TESTIMONY, IT LOGICALLY SHOULD HAVE COORDINATED WITH DEPARTMENT OF STATE IN ADVANCE. MORE THAN ONE PAPER CITED AMBASSADOR'S SPEECH MONDAY EVENING AS SUPPORTING VIEW THAT TESTIMONY IN COURT AND THAT BEFORE CONGRESS ARE TWO DIFFERENT THINGS, WITH SEOUL SINMUN CONCLUDING THAT AMBASSADOR MEANT THAT NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD BE CONCLUDED THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS. SINA ILBO

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QUOTED FONMIN PAK TONG-JIN AS SAYING AT SITE OF AMBASSADOR'S SPEECH THAT RESULTS OF NEGOTIATIONS WOULD BECOME CLEAR IN "JUST SEVERAL MORE DAYS".

3. CHUNGANG ILBO QUOTED FORFIGN MINISTRY SOURCES AS COMMENTING INFORMALLY TUESDAY ON AMBASSADOR'S SPEECH THAT PROBLEMS OF PAK TONG-SON AND KOREAN SECURITY MUST BE CLEARLY DISTINGUISHED.

4. SINA ILBO QUOTED GOVERNMENT SOURCE AS SAYIING TUESDAY, WHEN ASKED ABOUT ASST ATTORNEY GENERAL CIVILETTI'S REMARKS ON 12/10 THAT QUESTIONING OF PAK MIGHT START ON 12/26, THAT NO DATE FOR U.S. REPRESENTATIVES' VISIT TO KOREA HAS YET BEEN SET, BUT THAT THAT DATE WAS POSSIBLE,

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"IF NEGOTIATIONS ARE CONCLUDED AS EXPECTED".

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